

**Minutes of the Taxicab Advisory Group (TAG)**  
**October 26, 2010 - 2:30 PM**  
**140 W. Flagler Street, Room #908**

**Members Present:**

Les Eisenberg	PSC Principal
Diego Feliciano	License Holder
Jerry Moskowitz	PSC Principal
William Samek, Ph.D.	Consumer/Chairperson
Monica Beltran	MIA Representative
Fred Wong, Jr.	Seaport Representative
Robert Singer	Consumer
Dawood Akhtar	Chauffeur
Ilene Hyams	Office of ADA Coordination Representative
Rolando Aedo	Visitor Industry Representative
Anson Jean-Pierre	Chauffeur

**Staff Present:**

Joe Mora	Director, PTRD
Steven Bobes	AO3, PTRD
Ivan Cotayo	Taxi Stand Coordinator
Bridgette Newsome	Secretary, PTRD

Mr. Mora conducted member roll call and informed the Vice Chair a quorum was present.

Vice Chair Moskowitz called the meeting to order, welcomed members and the newly appointed driver representative, Mr. Anson Jean-Pierre, who provided a brief introduction. Mr. Moskowitz stated he would run today's meeting until Dr. Samek arrived.

Mr. Moskowitz requested corrections be made to the September 30, 2010 minutes and read them into the record. Mr. Eisenberg moved the 9/30/2010 minutes as amended, seconded by Ms. Hyams, with unanimous approval.

**Chauffeur of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter (2010):** Ms. Beltran nominated driver 3-4 as Chauffeur of the Quarter, seconded by Mr. Wong, with unanimous approval.

**Taxi Stands Update:** Mr. Mora provided an update of the taxicab stand report and identified new at Canyon Ranch, Viceroy Spa, Days Inn Unincorporated Dade County, Four Point Sheraton Bal Harbor Resort and Best Western Beach Resort. During Art Basel, temporary stands will be located at: Miami Beach Convention Center and Midtown Miami NE 1 Street between 29<sup>th</sup> & 30th Street. CSD' is working with NASCAR to establish stands for their event. In total: 181 taxi stands have been established, providing a total of 458 spaces, to exclude the Airport and Seaport.

Mr. Aedo questioned the stand at the Viceroy and noted a stand currently exists there. He believed the better spot was adjacent to the new JW Marriott and Epic. Mr. Feliciano replied, when you have taxi stands you don't have buying of doors (BOD) and commended CSD staff for a job well done in creating stands throughout the county. Discussion followed regarding establishing new taxi stands at: Magic City Casino; MIA's new rental car facility, the EPIC Center and J.W. Marriott Hotels in downtown Miami. Mr. Mora replied a 3-car stand has been established at Magic City Casino; CSD is currently working with MIA and FDOT to establish taxi stands at the rental car facility. CSD will explore the new hotels and work with the City of Miami's Offstreet Parking.

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Dr. Samek joined the meeting.

**Legislative Updates:**

**Comm. Martinez' Proposed Ordinance:**

Mr. Mora reviewed Commissioner Gimenez's instructions at the October Government Operations Committee meeting in which he requested staff survey various jurisdictions utilizing credit cards and prepare a report for the November GOC meeting.

Mr. Eisenberg and Mr. Feliciano questioned what other jurisdictions having convenience fees do and charge. Mr. Moskowitz said Commissioners didn't understand the players and thought staff should explain the difference between drivers, permit holders/owners and consumers. He believed it would be drivers who ultimately pay these fees, under no circumstances will permit holders absorb the fees and be tasked with policing equipment. He said that although credit cards are beneficial to drivers, drivers do not view it in the same way. Ms. Hyams stated consumers should have a choice. Mr. Eisenberg remarked that no one would pay if there are incentives.

Mr. Mora noted the credit card requirements solely applied to the 10 licenses in Commissioner Martinez's proposed Ordinance. If a medallion holder desired to incorporate at that time they would need to comply with the technology.

A company representative remarked that if companies are allowed to charge passengers his entire fleet of 300 cabs would be placed into service. Others said customers do not mind paying a convenience fee but the amount being charged is exorbitant. Members questioned who is responsible for equipment failure and routine maintenance.

Mr. Feliciano moved to recommend that staff accept a format like "TaxiPass" if they lower the 10% fee to a more reasonable flat fee. Mr. Eisenberg seconded for discussion purposes.

Mr. Mora reiterated as a Commission sponsored item CSD does not have authority to change it. Dr. Samek asked whether TAG could form an opinion. Mr. Mora responded that TAG is welcome to speak with their elected officials. Mr. Moskowitz agreed with the motion but wanted a flat fee for credit card use. Other members voiced opposition to passing the cost onto consumers. They could not support the motion and said drivers would make more money in tips if they offered credit cards.

Mr. Feliciano offered a new motion recommending customers pay one flat uniform convenience fee countywide, and to lower the current percentage rate of 10% to a nominal flat fee. Ms. Hyams suggested instead of saying 10% it should state the most reasonable percentage to get the job done. Members requested a dollar amount be placed in his motion. Mr. Feliciano stated he would accept the \$3.00 amount to his motion.

Dr. Samek remarked having credit cards was critically important and agreed the public should not pay for these fees. Ms. Beltran & Mr. Aedo believed in the event the group came to an agreement, the basic understanding was cabs should take credit cards.

Ms. Beltran suggested the County put out a bid proposal. Mr. Mora responded, in order to do that standards would have to be crafted. Ms. Beltran requested staff obtain the NYC documents regarding credit card use for review. Mr. Mora restated this proposal only affects 10 licenses designated in Commissioner Martinez proposed legislation. Mr. Eisenberg stated although it only affects 10 now, this will set precedent in the industry.

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Mr. Moskowitz seconded the motion for discussion. Discussion continued regarding placement of technology in all cabs countywide, technology standards and equipment.

Mr. Moskowitz discussed a motion passed a year ago that would place technology in taxi's in exchange for transferability and was concerned that the current motion would rescind TAG's prior motion.

Mr. Feliciano requested Staff read his motion. Mr. Bobes read into record Mr. Feliciano's motion: One uniform flat fee for taxi credit card use, no more than a \$3.00 credit card user fees that customers would pay. For clarity, drivers would not pay for credit card technology, cabs countywide would be uniform not just the 10 described in Commissioner Martinez proposed ordinance. The motion passed 8 in favor and 3 opposed.

Mr. Feliciano advised various members of the taxi industry have brought to his attention a section of the 1998 Ordinance regarding the responsible party for paying inspection fees; owners (permit holders) pay for these inspection fees. He said the ordinance should be revised as permit holders are not responsible for drivers, or their associated fees. He said the Board has never been advised the 1998 Ordinance does not work and requested this be changed.

Mr. Feliciano offered a motion to recommend the Board change the 1998 rule regarding permit holder inspection fees to owners of vehicles paying for inspection fees. Mr. Moskowitz seconded the motion. Mr. Eisenberg said he could not support it.

Mr. Moskowitz offered a motion that stated: TAG should prepare a letter with suggested recommendations to include TAG's reasoning and support of Commissioner Martinez proposed ordinance. That letter should also include the formula on how the proposed "10" lottery cabs came about and set the record straight. Dr. Samek called the motion that was seconded by Ms. Hyams and approved. Dr. Samek requested Mr. Moskowitz assist in writing the letter to Commissioners.

Mr. Mora stated prior to Commissioner Martinez proposed ordinance the Commissioner sought input and requested industry submit recommendations to his office. The Commissioner took those recommendations and brought forth his proposed legislation. The department can not prohibit members from writing letters to the Board.

**Passenger Motor Carrier (PMC) Ordinance**

Mr. Mora provided an update on the PMC Ordinance submitted for first reading on October 16, 2010 but later withdrawn for further review. It is hopeful this proposed legislation will be placed on an agenda sometime after the holidays. Mr. Eisenberg questioned why the withdrawal and rules governing reciprocity. He said it didn't exist in the current version of the Code and would further exasperate the situation existing with PMC's. Members discussed the reciprocity and various other issues of concern. Mr. Mora said this item was place on the agenda for information only.

In follow-up to a request by Vice Chair Moskowitz at LAG's September meeting, Mr. Mora discussed a topic regarding luxury sedans, vehicle age and service entry. The TAG Committee saw no further reason to discuss.

**Adjournment:**

There being no further business, Mr. Akhtar moved to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Eisenberg, and approved by all. The TAG meeting adjourned.